APSEA

Resource Booklet on Educational Interpreting

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD 1
VISUAL LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS 2
CLASSROOM TEACHERS 3
STUDENTS 4
INTERPRETERS 5
WHO DOES WHAT? 6
POSITIONING 7
THE CODE OF ETHICS 8
WANT TO KNOW MORE? 9

FORWARD

Visual Language Interpreters are responsible to faithfully interpret the spoken language used by persons who can hear into the signed language used by persons who are Deaf.

Visual Language Interpreters work in a wide variety of settings. Generally an interpreter is used when two people, who want to communicate with each other, do not share the same language. Visual language interpreters are trained to work specifically between people who use sign language or speech reading (and are Deaf) and those who use spoken English (and can hear).

Interpreters are used in a multitude of settings. One might find an interpreter in, include staff meetings, court rooms, doctor's offices, university lecture halls, and political rallies to name a few. The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority(APSEA) employs visual language interpreters to interpret specifically in the kindergarten to grade 12 educational setting and are called Educational Interpreter/Assistants (EI/A).

This resource booklet has been developed to assist those of you who may be new to communicating through an interpreter. We, at APSEA, hope you find it to be a useful tool that will raise your comfort level and clarify your expectations while utilizing the services of a visual language interpreter.

VISUAL LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING

Sign Language Interpreters

A sign language interpreter in the educational setting facilitates communication between persons who are hearing (non-signers) and persons who are Deaf (signers) by:

- sitting or standing near the speaker/teacher, (chalkboard, overhead, television etc) and interpreting what is spoken into visual language
- simultaneously conveying the mood and intent of the message with dynamic equivalence
- rephrasing, adjusting or expanding an idea to make it understandable by the audience
- becoming familiar with classroom material in advance
- tutoring in subject areas under the guidance of the classroom teacher or other appropriate members of the educational team

Oral Interpreters

Oral interpreters facilitate communication, between persons who are hearing and persons who are deaf and who have well developed speech reading skills, by:

- sitting in front of the student and silently repeating, at a normal rate and with normal enunciation, what is said by the hearing person
- verbalizing the students message to the hearing person, if necessary
- simultaneously conveying the mood and the intent of the message with expression and natural gestures
- rephrasing or adding words or phrases to increase visibility on the lips, and therefore enhancing student comprehension
- The same expectations are placed on oral interpreters in the areas of preparation and tutoring as stated above for the sign language interpreter.

CLASSROOM TEACHERS WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Look directly at the student who is Deaf when communicating with him/her.
- Expect the same level of participation, work habits, behaviour, and academic performance from the student who is Deaf, as you expect from the other students in your class.
- Respect the individuality of the student who is Deaf while maintaining the same expectation for behaviour and performance for all students.
- Allow the interpreter access to all materials necessary for adequate preparation. The more time the interpreter has to prepare for a lecture, film, etc., the more accurate the interpretation will be.
- Expect the interpreter will use first person when interpreting.
- Understand that the interpreter will be slightly behind the speaker (process time) and therefore the student who is Deaf will receive the information slightly behind the other students. For the student who is Deaf to fully participate in the classroom, these few extra seconds should be considered when posing questions etc.
- Guide the tutoring process for the interpreter with other members of the educational team as necessary.
- Understand that while working, an interpreter should not be called upon to perform non-interpreting tasks.
- Speak at a normal rate, enabling the interpreter to provide a smooth interpretation.
- Avoid obstructing the student's view of the interpreter.
- Use visual aids such as blackboards and overhead projectors, as they augment the visual learning of students generally, and the student who is Deaf specifically.
- Be prepared for any comment that you communicate to the interpreter in the presence of the student who is Deaf to be interpreted to the student. Do not say things to the interpreter, or in front of the student that you do not wish to have interpreted..
- Accept responsibility for classroom management of all students including the student who is Deaf.

STUDENTS WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Indicate when they don't understand the speaker.
- Indicate when they do not understand the interpreter's signs, so the interpreter can clarify or change them.
- Direct questions to the teacher or person with whom they are communicating, do not direct questions to the interpreter.
- Face the group or person with whom they are communicating. Do not face the interpreter.
- Be aware that the interpreter will voice reasonable signed communication (e.g. conversations taking place during class time).
- Make the interpreter aware if their conversation is private.
- Ask for a note taker, if one is needed.
- Accept responsibility for examination performance, homework assignments, test dates, school supplies, etc.
- Be aware that personal conversations with the interpreter should not interfere with class work.
- Ask for permission from the teacher to have their exams interpreted into sign language.
- Participate in class.
- Study and prepare for tests and complete assignments.
- Show the interpreter any technical signs or other signs that will facilitate a better interpretation.

STUDENTS WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER ARE ENCOURAGED NOT TO:

- Expect interpreters to remember things (e.g. exam dates, homework assignments, etc.) for them.
- Blame the interpreter for miscommunication, failing an exam, or missing a deadline. Students are responsible for their own performances.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VISUAL LANGUAGE INTERPRETER ARE TO:

- Interpret in instructional situations, including student-to-student dialogue.
- Interpret in non-instructional situation such as guidance and counseling sessions, tutorials, assemblies, field-trips and any other situation requiring communication during the school day.
- Prepare for interpreting assignments by attempting to acquire and becoming familiar with materials to be covered.
- Establish an open and communicative relationship with the classroom teacher and other members of the educational team.
- Participate as a member of the school's educational team with the specific responsibility of providing communication between individuals who are Deaf and others.
- Participate on the educational team by commenting on the interpreter process and contribute to the discussion on interpreter services within a particular situation.
- Comply with performance standards, policies, practices and regulations of APSEA and the school district in which they are interpreting.
- Conduct themselves in a manner to reflect the values underlying the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) Code of Ethics.
- Report drug/alcohol use or possession, and any other activity which poses a threat to the safety of the students and others when required to by law, principle or policy.
- Work with the itinerant teacher and principal of the school to develop a list of suitable substitute interpreters at the beginning of each school year, according to APSEA procedure.

WHO DOES WHAT?

The Classroom Teacher is responsible for classroom instruction and management. She/he is the individual who sets the standards for acceptable work habits, behaviour, and academic performance for all students in the classroom. As well, the classroom teacher is responsible to provide the interpreter with as much educational material in advance as possible.

The Student accepts the responsibility for her/his own actions. She/he is expected to perform academically and behaviourly within acceptable limits within the school environment.

The Interpreter is responsible to faithfully interpret spoken language into sign language and sign language into spoken language while maintaining neutrality, impartiality, and professionalism. (Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada)

APSEA Itinerant Teacher, in collaboration with the principal, provides consultative service on education for students who are Deaf. The Itinerant Teacher monitors and assists the interpreter with tutorial. As well, working with the interpreter, develop a list of suitable substitute interpreters at the beginning of each school year.

The School District Resource Teacher in each school provides leadership to the staff in modifying programs for the student who is D/deaf, through consultation with APSEA.

APSEA Provincial Program Supervisors, in collaboration with student services personnel is responsible for the administration of support services to students who are D/deaf including the supervision of the itinerant teacher and the interpreter.

The APSEA Consultant on Interpreter Services guides and advises persons (both Deaf and hearing) and interpreters on the appropriate role and expectations of the interpreter. As well, the consultant provides professional development direction to individual interpreters via periodic observations and evaluations, and guides interpreters with respect to resource information.

APSEA will provide ongoing supervision of all the interpreters and itinerant teachers. APSEA will contribute to the ongoing professional development of the interpreters, as well as offer in-services to schools on the use of interpreters when requested.

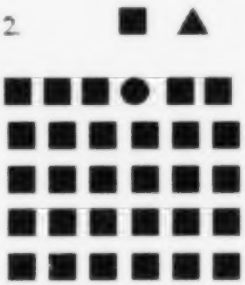
POSITIONING

Interpreter will position themselves in the sight line of the student who is Deaf. Eye contact between the two individuals who are communicating with each other (i.e. not with the interpreter) is encouraged and considered prior to positioning. Interpreters need to be seen and therefore good lighting on the interpreter is essential.

▲ Interpreter
■ Person(s) who are hearing
● Person(s) who are deaf

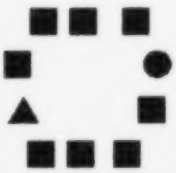
One-on-one
Counselor, principal, coach, etc)

2.



Assembly

3.



Round table meeting
(student council, IEP, study group, etc.)

4.

Student who is Deaf presenting to the class

CODE OF ETHICS

All Visual Language Interpreters are expected to conduct themselves in a manner to reflect the values underlying the Code of Ethics developed by The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada. The Code of Ethics can be viewed in its entirety at www.avlic.ca . There are 5 basic values underlying the Code of Ethics.

1. Professional accountability:

Accepting responsibility for professional decisions and actions.

2. Professional competence:

Committing to provide quality professional service throughout one's practice.

3. Non-discrimination:

Approaching professional service with respect and cultural sensitivity.

4. Integrity in professional relationships:

Dealing honestly and fairly with consumers and colleagues.

5. Integrity in business practices:

Dealing honestly and ethically in all business practices.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT INTERPRETERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING?

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Humphrey, J. and B. Alcorn. (1994). *So you want to be an interpreter?: An introduction to sign language interpreting* (2nd edition). Amarillo, Tx: H&H Publishers.

Frishberg, N. (1986). *Interpreting: An introduction.* Silver Spring, Md.: RID Publications. (Revised and reprinted, 1990).

Isham, W. (1986). Message analysis. In (MacIntire, Ed.) *Interpreting: the art of cross cultural mediation* (Proceedings of the 1985 RID Convention). Silver Springs, Md.: RID Publications.

Ramsey, C. (1997). *Deaf children in public schools.* Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Seal, B.C. (1998). *Best Practices in educational interpreting.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Winston, E. (1992). *An interpreted education: Inclusion or exclusion?* In L. Swabey (Ed.), (Proceedings of the CIT Eighth National Convention) Conference of Interpreter Trainers.

For more information on APSEA or AVLIC visit these web sites:

www.apsea.ca The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority.

www.avlic.ca The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada.